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ABSTRACT

The Opening Our Doors Project of the Pioneer Library System of Norman, Oklahoma takes public library service to preschool and day care facilities by means of learning kits housed in tote bags. The sturdy, zippered tote bags are full of books, games, toys, learning folders, and so forth. There is a tote bag for each of 75 different topics. Topics covered include Animal Babies, Dinosaurs, Native Americans, Safety, Water, Weather, Winter, Colors, Counting, Feelings, Opposites, and Senses. By way of illustration, the tote bag on the topic of Native Americans contains 5 books and 26 additional items, which range from musical instruments, posters, an audio cassette, and stamp and stamp pads, to masks, necklaces, a war bonnet, and a peace pipe. Also included in the tote is a learning folder with a list of contents, a sheet of learning activities, a resource sheet, a bibliography, a list of topics, and recipes for a bubble-blowing mixture, and tempera and finger paint. This amply illustrated brochure describes the project in terms of need, basic idea, marketing, costs and resources, and results. The learning kits were so popular in preschool and day care facilities that parents requested kits for use at home. A list of learning and parenting kits, and lists of the contents of sample learning and parenting kits, are provided. (RH)

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Pioneer Library System
Mary Sherman, Director
Norman, Oklahoma

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Pioneer Library System
concept dissemination
funded by The Hitachi Foundation

[redacted]

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The Need

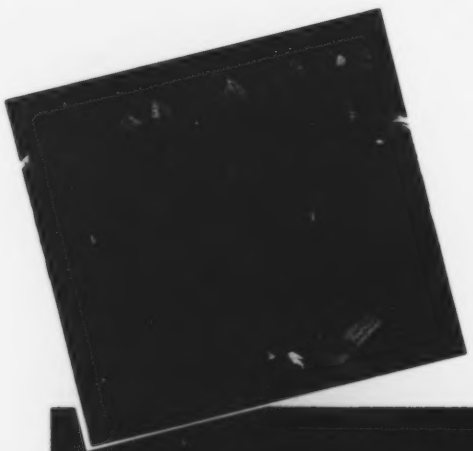
Young children need the public library.

Education experts say that 50% of all learning may take place before the age of five.

Research indicates that reading to children has a great impact on learning in general, and on acquisition of language in particular.

Consequently, parents and librarians recognize the important role of the public library in early childhood development. Every year, parents bring children to preschool storytime to introduce them to books and the library. They see their children enjoy and benefit from the stories, fingerplays, and other group activities.

A trip to the library is a chance to play in a welcoming atmosphere and a chance to check out books to read at home.



Many of today's children miss the opportunity to visit the public library.

Today, many young children are unable to benefit from the traditional preschool activities offered at the public library. A growing number of children under age five spend most of their day in preschool or day-care facilities.

Changing family patterns—both parents employed outside the home and single parent households—mean parents have less time to take their children to the library. Therefore, the public library must create new programs to reach young children where they spend their days.

Pioneer Library System is taking library service to children in preschool and day-care facilities with the Opening Our Doors project.

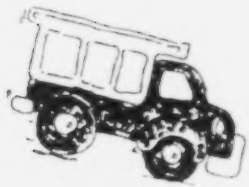
Opening Our Doors is reaching children in preschool and day-care facilities with fun in a tote bag that leads to learning. The tote bags are learning kits full of books, games, toys, learning folders, and more. The kits check out to preschool and day-care facilities to share the benefits of the library with the children.

Fun and learning in a tote bag

Each sturdy zippered tote bag contains a learning kit based on one of 75 different topics. The topics include Shapes and Sizes, Birthdays, Holidays, Growing, Water, Safety, Nutrition, and so forth. (Look for a list on page 11.)

Opening Our Doors learning kits must be educationally and developmentally sound.

Faculty and staff of the Early Childhood Development Institute at The University of Oklahoma worked with librarians to establish the learning goals. Students in early childhood development at the university wrote the learning sheets to list the learning experiences and benefits that care givers could share with their children. (See samples of learning sheets on pages 13 and 16.)

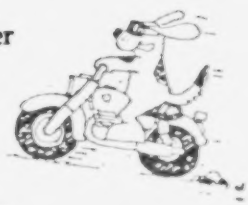


Selection

Each kit contains books as its foundation. Non-sexist, non-racial, and non-stereotypical materials and books are selected that help children learn from the concrete to the abstract.

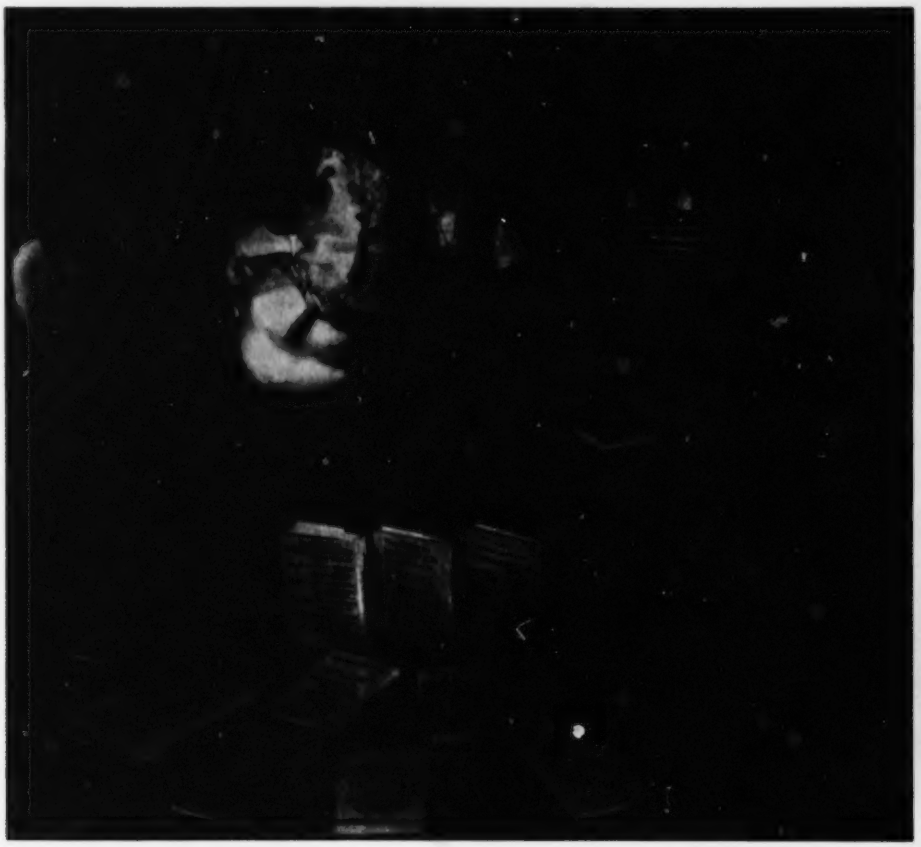
Because children learn from actual experience and participation, kit contents are intended to encourage fun that leads to learning.

Music on cassette tapes helps children experience music and movement. Teaching pictures aid in expanding vocabulary and clarifying concepts. Matching games develop cognitive analytical thought. Costumes encourage dramatic play and foster creativity.



Where to buy

It is often necessary to go beyond book vendors and educational suppliers for the materials required to develop the wide variety of topics. The kits can be completed by shopping such places as museum shops, the Salvation Army, army/navy surplus, pharmacies, Hillel Foundation, and pet shops.



Day-care and preschool care givers need to know about the Opening Our Doors project.

State licensing agency helps

The child care licensing agency of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services provides lists of local preschool and day-care facilities. The staffs of the facilities are asked for suggestions for kit topics.

The state agency gives continuing education credit for care givers who attend workshops to learn how to use the learning kits. Caseworkers endorse the use of Opening Our Doors learning kits during the licensing procedures.

Contacts with care givers

Opening Our Doors brochures are given to known care givers who visit the public library. Librarians visit with them to tell them more about the service.

Educational programs

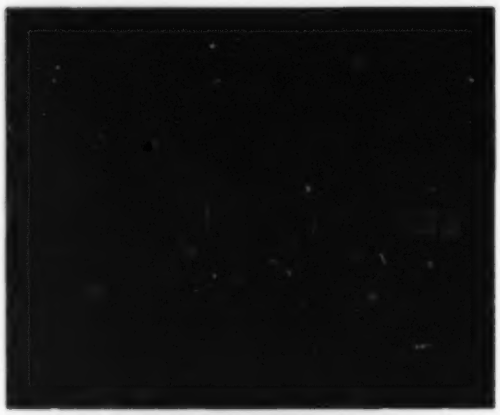
Library programs for care givers and parents, featuring child development specialists, offer a chance to learn more about child development. Librarians speak to early childhood education and parent groups to tell them about Opening Our Doors.

Annual letters

Letters are sent to day-care and preschool directors each August to remind them to include the learning kits in their lesson plans for the year. The letters include an updated list of all the learning kits that are offered.

Help delivering library services

While most care givers check out learning kits during regular visits to the library, Rainbow Fleet takes the kits to home day-care facilities in a portion of the Pioneer service area. Deliveries are made by professional teachers who show the care givers how to use the Opening Our Doors learning kits.



The Opening Our Doors project began with a need, an idea, and an LSCA grant.

Resources

Start up costs for the project were $10,000 from a Library Services and Construction Act grant administered through the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.

Financial support for the project grew to nearly $100,000 with major grants from The Hitachi Foundation and The Robert S. and Grayce B. Kerr Foundation. Additional funds were received from The Kirkpatrick Foundation.

The foundations recognized that this project, in developing literacy in young children, could have a significant impact in preventing adult illiteracy.

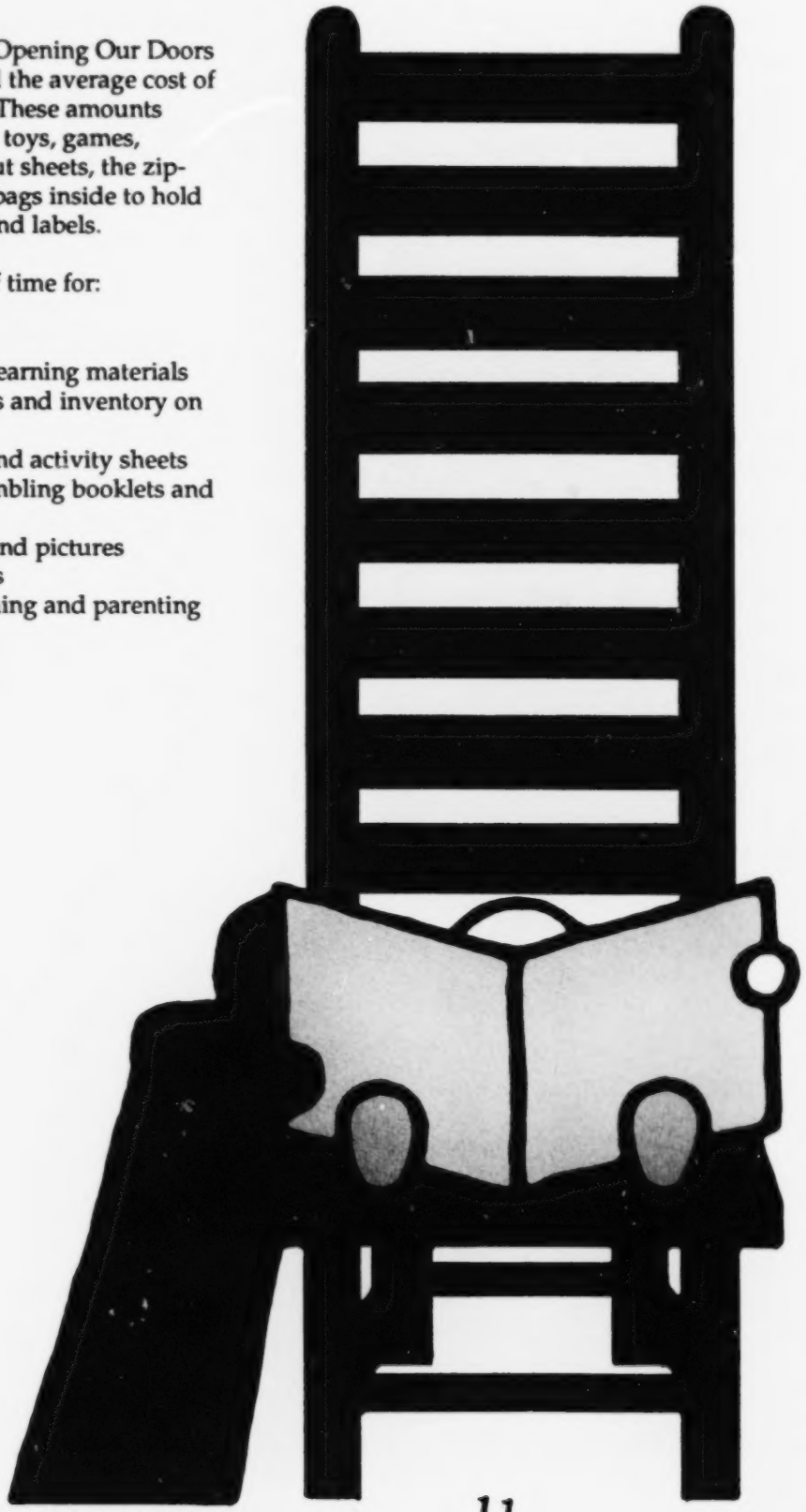
Increased funding insured the creation of more learning kit topics. The funds also provided for the expansion of the project to include parenting kits, smaller versions of the learning kits, for use at home.

Expenses

The average cost of an Opening Our Doors learning kit is $205, and the average cost of a parenting kit is $100. These amounts cover the cost of books, toys, games, learning folders, handout sheets, the zippered tote bag, smaller bags inside to hold the learning elements, and labels.

Other costs include staff time for:

- selecting topics
- reviewing books
- shopping for other learning materials
- entering cost records and inventory on the computer
- typing of resource and activity sheets
- compiling and assembling booklets and handouts
- laminating posters and pictures
- labeling all materials
- assembling the learning and parenting kits
- marketing the kits



Benefits

- **Young children reap the benefits of a visit to the library when their care givers share the Opening Our Doors learning kits with them.**
- **Children have fun learning.**
- **Children and their parents may discover the source (the public library) and plan time for regular visits.**
- **Children have a greater chance to grow up to be adults who read.**

Parents, day-care workers in large facilities, care givers at home with a few children, and early childhood development specialists all praise the Opening Our Doors project.

"Dear librarian,

We have enjoyed the learning kits very much at our preschool! It has been a tremendous asset to our growing program! As we expand next year, we plan to take full advantage of this program and use it to its maximum benefit.

Thank you and your supporters for making this program available. This program can only add strength to what we—daycares, preschools, and parents—can teach our children through reading and doing."

The Pioneer Library staff would like to help you take library service to young children in preschool and day-care facilities.

For additional information and to receive a free video cassette explaining the project further, contact:

Norman Public Library Children's Services
Pioneer Library System
225 North Webster
Norman, Oklahoma 73069
(405) 321-1481

Opening Our Doors learning kits were so popular in preschool and day-care facilities that parents recognized their value for early childhood development and demanded parenting kits for use at home. Here is a partial list of topics developed by Pioneer.

Animal Babies
Beginning Preschool
Birthdays
Child Safety
Christmas
Community Helpers
Concepts--Colors
Concepts--Counting
Concepts--Feelings
Concepts--Opposites
Concepts--Senses
Concepts--Shapes & Sizes
Cowboys
Dinosaurs
Easter Eggs
Egg Hatching
Families
Farms & Farm Animals
Gardening
Halloween
Handicapped
Hospitals & Doctors
Life Skills--Learning to Dress Yourself
Movement
Native Americans
Nutrition
Rhythm Band
Safety
Seasons
Shadows
Thanksgiving
Transportation
Water
Weather
Winter
Zoo Animals

Adoption
Bedtime
Beginning School
Birthdays
Camping
Community Helpers
Concepts--Shapes & Sizes
Cowboys
Death
Dinosaurs
Divorce
Doctors, Nurses & Dentists
Dogs & Cats
Farms & Farm Animals
Fears
Fine Arts
Going on a Trip
Holidays--Halloween & Thanksgiving
Holidays--Christmas & Hanukkah
Indian Tribes
Infants & Babies
Knights, Kings, Castles & Dragons
Let's Pretend
Life skills--Dressing & Toilet Training
Life skills--Manners & Friends
Monsters
Moving
New Baby
Pets
Remarriage & Stepfamilies
Safety
Science
Siblings
Sick in Bed
Space
Working Mothers

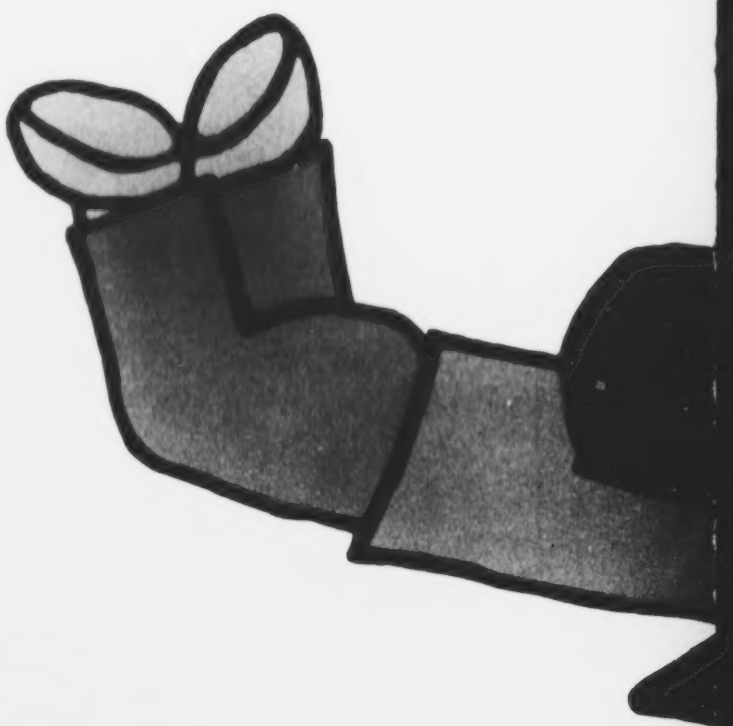
Contents

Native Americans

BOOKS
Growing Up Indian by Evelyn Wolfson
Moonsong Lullaby by Jamake Highwater
Native American Art published by Philbrook Art Center
Knots on a Counting Rope by Bill Martin
The Gift of the Sacred Dog by Paul Goble

MATERIALS
drum
teaching pictures
buffalo
Indian Chiefs poster
Apache tom-tom
Otoe tom-tom with drum stick
powder horn
horn rattle
Her Seven Brothers poster
Legend of the Indian Paintbrush poster
Homage American audio cassette
Indian flute
ermine tail
bison masks
Sitting Bull & Geronimo postcards
glass trading necklace
mandella
beaded princess crown
bone choker
medallion necklaces
information sheets on Indian tribes
white rabbit pelts
eagle claw necklace
war bonnet
horse rubber stamp & stamp pads
pipestone peace pipe

LEARNING FOLDER
list of contents
learning sheet
resource sheet
bibliography
list of topics available
recipes for
  bubble blowing mixture
  tempora paint
  play dough
  finger paint



Learning Sheet

Native Americans

1. Opportunities for learning
   a. Offer exposure to a different culture
   b. Create ideas for dramatic play
   c. Provide activities for large muscle development

2. Activities for 2 and 3 year olds
   a. Read **Moonsong Lullaby**
   b. Encourage children to pretend that they are Indians in their camp at sundown
   c. Talk about different things Indians might do at a camp
   d. Using the recipe in the book, **Growing Up Indian,** make Indian fry bread with the children

3. Activities for 4 and 5 year olds
   a. Share the book, **Native American Art**
   b. Provide materials for children to make their own Indian art
   c. Ask children to tell about their art
   d. Using the recipe in the book **Growing Up Indian**, make Indian fry bread with the children

4. Additional Ideas
   a. Invite a Native American to visit with the class
   b. Play cassette tape of American Indian flute music to relax the children at nap time
   c. Display pictures of North American Indian personalities
   d. Encourage dramatic play with Indian drum, beads, head dress, necklace, stick puppets
   e. Provide oatmeal boxes and other materials to let children make their own drums

Resource Sheet

Native Americans

BIBLIOGRAPHY
American Indian Games and Crafts by Charles L. Blood
Corn is Maize by Aliki
Doctor Coyote: A Native American Aesop's Fables by John Bierhorst
Where the Buffaloes Begin by Olaf Baker
The Gift of the Sacred Dog by Paul Goble

POEM
That Wind

That wind, that wind
Shakes my teepee, shakes my teepee,
And sings a song for me.
And sings a song for me.
--Kiowa

FINGERPLAY
Teepee

A teepee is quite a home, *(Form triangle with hands)*
Especially for Indians who must roam. *(Place fingers behind head)*
When it is time for them to go
To hunt the mighty buffalo, *(Pretend to shoot bow and arrow)*
They pack their teepees, sticks and all *(Pretend to pack teepee)*
Then build them again straight and tall. *(Form teepee with hands)*

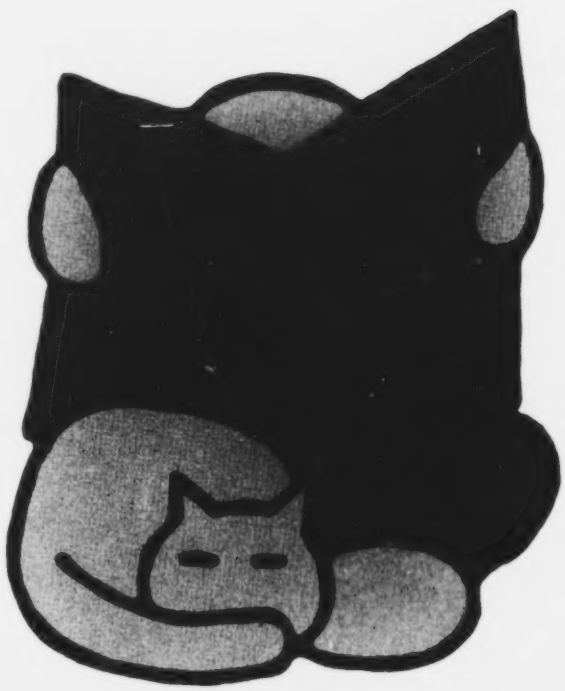
Contents

New Baby

BOOKS
Too Big by Holly Keller
New Baby by Fred Rogers
Babies by Fujikawa

MATERIALS
boy bath baby doll
girl bath baby doll
small baby doll
twin rattle
Fun Shine
Focus Pocus
receiving blanket
booties
baby bottles
bibs
diapers
undershirt

LEARNING FOLDER
list of contents
learning sheet
resource sheet
bibliography
list of topics available
recipes for
- bubble blowing mixture
- tempora paint
- play dough
- finger paint



Learning Sheet

New Baby

1. Opportunities for learning
   a. Create ideas for dramatic play
   b. Develop fine motor skills and coordination from dressing dolls
   c. Encourage acceptance of a new baby in the family
   d. Explore how to care for a new baby
   e. Offer opportunities for discussion about boy babies and girl babies

2. Activities for 2 and 3 year olds
   a. Read **Little Rabbit's Baby Brother**
   b. Encourage child to play with the dolls and nursery items
   c. Assure your child of your love
   d. Explain to your child that the new baby will need special attention

3. Activities for 4 and 5 year olds
   a. Read **Arthur's Baby**
   b. Let child play with the dolls
   c. Let child help in feeding, bathing, and diapering

4. Additional ideas
   a. Invite a friend with a baby to visit and let child observe baby's care
   b. Show your child how to give the baby a bottle
   c. Show your child how to play games like peek-a-boo with the baby
   d. Take child shopping to buy clothes and food for the baby
   e. Take child to the hospital where mother and baby will stay when the baby is born
   f. Visit the nursery and look at newborn babies with your child

Resource Sheet

New Baby

BIBLIOGRAPHY
The Box with Red Wheels by Maud Fuller Petersham
Why Couldn't I be an Only Kid Like You, Wigger by Barbara Shook Hazen
A Baby for Max by Kathryn Lasky
The New Baby at Your House by Joanna Cole
I Want to Tell You about My Baby by Roslyn Banish

POEM
Six Weeks Old

He is so small, he does not know
The summer sun, the winter snow;
The spring that ebbs and comes again,
All this is far beyond his ken.

A little world he feels and sees;
His mother's arms, his mother's knees;
He hides his face against her breast,
And does not care to learn the rest.
--Christopher Morley

FINGERPLAY
Baby

Here's a ball for baby *(Make circle with thumb and pointer)*
Big and soft and round.
Here is the baby's hammer, *(Make hammer with fist)*
Oh, how he can pound!
Here is baby's music, *(Hold up hands facing each other)*
Clapping, clapping, so, *(Clap hands)*
Here are baby's soldiers *(Hold fingers upright)*
Standing in a row.
Here is baby's trumpet, Toot-too, too-too, too. *(Two fists, one atop the other before the mouth)*
Here's the way that baby
Plays at peek-a-boo. *(Fingers of both hands spread before eyes)*
Here's a big umbrella *(Bring fingertips together in peak over head)*
To keep the baby dry.
Here is baby's cradle. *(Make peak of pointers and little fingers and rock)*
Rock a baby bye.

Contents

Community Helpers

BOOKS
Corduroy's Busy Street by Don Freeman
My Daddy is a Nurse by Mark Wandro
Mothers Can Do Anything by Joe Lasker
People Working by Douglas Florian
Fire Fighters A to Z by Jean Johnson

MATERIALS
fire fighter helmet
airline pilot cap
chef hat
ship captain cap
My Community teaching pictures
community friends bulletin board set with teacher's guide
What am I career character face frames & purpose sheet
Fisher-Price little people
wooden community service aids—mailbox, trashcan, parking meter, bus stop, fire hydrant, park bench, public telephone
Wedgie community helpers
rubber stamps of community helpers & ink pads
Jerry puzzle
career hat puzzle
flannel board with characters
community helper cards
mail carrier pouch & jacket
cardboard community helpers

LEARNING FOLDER

Dinosaurs

BOOKS
The Tyrannosaurus Game by Steven Kroll
Dinosaurs by Gail Gibbons
What Happened to Patrick's Dinosaurs by Carol Carrick
Prehistoric Pinkerton, by Steven Kellogg

MATERIALS
diplodocus
inflatable globe of prehistoric world
bulletin board set & teacher's guide
dinosaur poster
dinosaur teaching pictures set
dinosaur Read-a-Mat
small dinosaur figures
dinosaur cookie cutters
bath time stickers
dinosaur noses
Dynamic Dinosaurs audio cassette
Dinosaur Rock audio cassette with lyric sheet
triceratops floor puzzle
large dinosaur figures
dinosaur cards
templates of prehistoric figures

LEARNING FOLDER

Contents

Going on a Trip

BOOKS
Vacation Surprises by Patricia M. Newton
Emma's Vacation by David McPhail
The Moon Came Too by Nancy White Carlstrom
Sailing with the Wind by Thomas Locker
Car Tunes book & audio cassette

MATERIALS
small suitcase
toothbrush holder
soap box
rubber stamps of penny, nickle, dime, quarter & half dollar with ink pads
lap desk
Etch a Sketch
teaching pictures & manual
laser pad & stencil sheet with glow pen
Electra sketch pad with pencil
play money
car
mystery car
boat
airplane
train
The Bear's Vacation audio cassette
Mr. Gumpy's Motor Car audio cassette

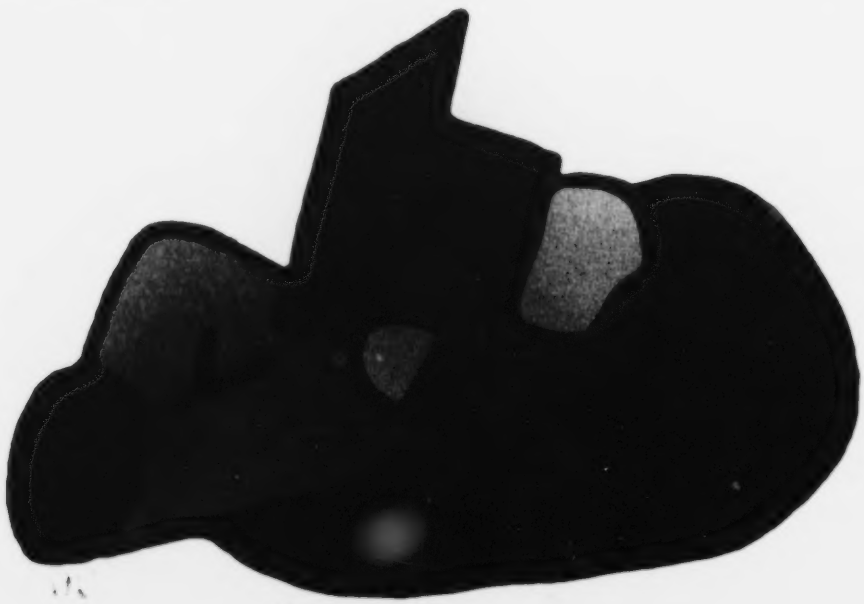
LEARNING FOLDER

Doctors, Nurses, and Dentists

BOOKS
Corduroy Goes to the Doctor by Don Freeman
I'd Rather Get a Spanking Than Go to the Doctor by Karen G. Frandsen
Going to the Doctor by Fred Rogers
My Dentist by Harlow Rockwell
Spot Visits the Hospital by Eric Hill

MATERIALS
medical kit with syringe, blood pressure gauge, thermometer, bandages, cast, reflex hammer & stethoscope
eye chart
metal storyboard with magnetic wooden figures
anatomy apron & organs with teacher's guide
doctor mask, cap & shirt
nurse puzzle
doctor puzzle
nurse apron & cap
doctor & nurse puppets
health concept pictures
ambulance & stretcher
Curious George Goes to the Hospital filmstrip & audio cassette

LEARNING FOLDER



Contents

Rhythm Band

BOOKS
Music, Music for Everyone by Vera B. Williams
The Old Banjo by Dennis Haseley
Making Musical Things by Ann Wiseman

MATERIALS
maracas
tambourine
cymbals
rhythm sticks
bells
sand blocks
tone block with striker
castanets
triangle
Preschool Playtime Band audio casstte
Rhythm Stick Activities audio cassette
Ben's Trumpet filmstrip & audio cassette
Mam Don't Allow filmstrip & audio cassette

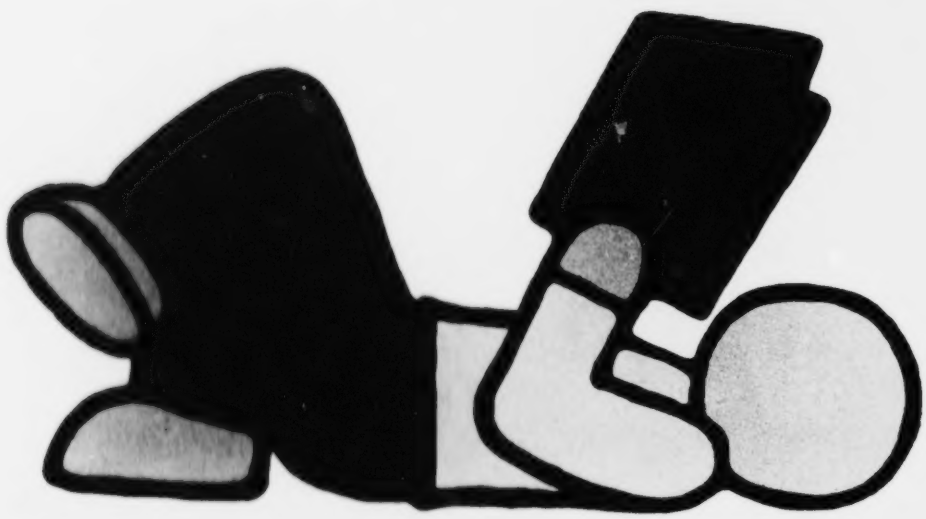
LEARNING FOLDER

Mother Goose

BOOKS
Tomie De Paola's Mother Goose

MATERIALS
nursery rhymes teaching pictures
bulletin board set & teacher's guide
Mother Goose puppet
monkey mitt
set of Humpty Dumpty characters
House that Jack Built flannel board characters
Mary Had a Little Lamb audio cassette & booklet
Little Bo Peep puzzle
Jack and Jill & Baa Baa Black Sheep cards
nursery rhyme puzzle
Humpty Dumpty game

LEARNING FOLDER



Contents

Child Safety

BOOKS
Matches, Lighters, and Firecrackers Are Not Toys by Dorothy Chlad
Playing on the Playground by Dorothy Chlad
When There is a Fire Go Outside by Dorothy Chlad
Berenstain Bears Learn about Strangers book & audio cassette

MATERIALS
traffic signs teaching pictures
Teach & Play Officer Playsafe
Safety Against Strangers bulletin board set
metal story board with magnetic figures
telephone
international signs
monkey mitt
safety concept cards
personal safety Fun-to-Know cards
Safe Not Sorry audio cassette
Dinosaurs, Beware! filmstrip & audio cassette

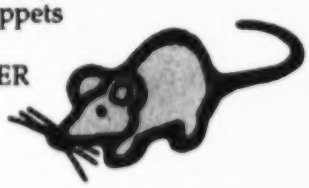
LEARNING FOLDER

Nature

BOOKS
Bug Book by Dr. Hugh Danks
Sarah's Questions by Harriet Ziefert
Wild, Wild Sunflower Child Anna by Nancy White Carlstrom

MATERIALS
Identification Guide to Sea Life Nature Collection
butterfly net
Fun-n-Learn field guide
magnifying bug view box
bug bottle
teaching pictures set
How a Rattlesnake Exhibit is Made poster
nature bulletin board set with teacher's guide
insect poster
favorite birds poster
seashells poster
Rocks & Fossils of Oklahoma pamphlet
The Caterpillar & Polliwog filmstrip & audio cassette
Fun-n-Learn nature field kit
insect rubber stamps & ink pads
caterpillar to butterfly puzzle
beaver & spider puppets

LEARNING FOLDER



More Learning Kits

Contents

Fine Arts

BOOKS
Curious George at the Ballet by Margaret Rey
Copycats and Artifacts by Marianne Ford
Where are You Ernest and Celestine? by Gabrielle Vincent
Philharmonic Gets Dressed by Karla Kuskin
Musical Instruments by Educational Insights
The Story of the Nutcracker Ballet audio cassette & book

MATERIALS
bulletin board set of musical instruments
pianophone
ballet Read-a-Mat placemat
Let's Pretend Theater
Music Maker song packets
art palette cookie cutters
musical note cookie cutter
art coasters
fine art cards
Playskool musical instruments puzzle
music & ballerina rubber stamps with ink pads
My First Concert audio cassette & booklet

LEARNING FOLDER

Colors

BOOKS
Red, Blue, Yellow Shoe by Tana Hoban
Colors by Sara Lynn
The Bee by Lisa Campbell Ernst
My Very First Book of Colors by Eric Carle

MATERIALS
Color Clowns game
color bulletin board set with teacher 's guide
metal story board with magnetic figures
Belle Color doll
colored glasses & information sheet
set of color paddles
monkey mitt
Color Me a Rainbow audio cassette
colored beakers
threading cubes with laces
Lauri peg board set
Roses are Red, Are Violets Blue? audio cassette
Freight Train filmstrip & audio cassette
color puzzle

LEARNING FOLDER

Contents

Egg Hatching

BOOKS
A Duckling is Born by Hans-Heinrich Isenbart
Chickens Aren't the Only Ones by Ruth Heller
All about Eggs by Millicent Ellis Selsam
Seven Eggs by Meredith Hooper

MATERIALS
duck basket
birth of frog puzzle
stuffed chicken in plastic egg
large plastic eggs
jumbo plastic eggs
papier maché eggs
nests
egg hatching puzzle
Beulah Bird & Bitsy Bird puppets
egg hatching costume
robin family puzzle

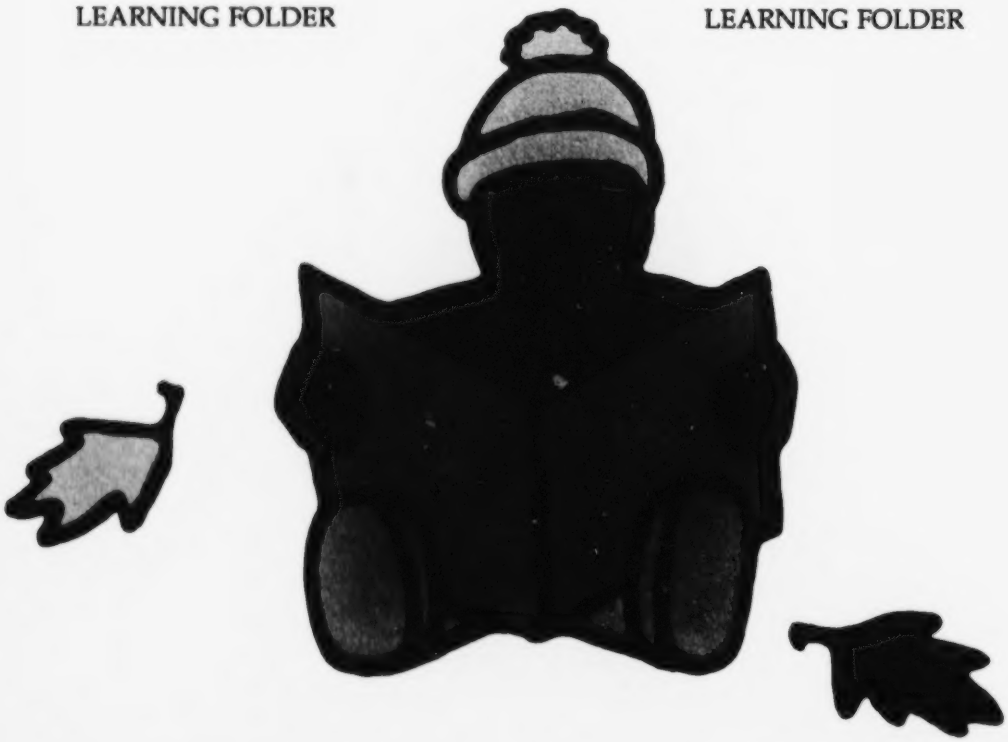
LEARNING FOLDER

Seasons

BOOKS
First Comes Spring by Anne Rockwell
Seasons by Heidi Goennel
Seasons on the Farm by Jane Miller
The Seasons of Arnold's Apple Tree by Gail Gibbons

MATERIALS
season teaching pictures with teacher's guide
Hoop & Loop seasons tree
straw hat
wool cap
pair of mittens
sunglasses
four seasons puzzle
The Apple Tree in Season puzzle
rubber stamps of seasons & ink pads
Button Up matching game
The Mare on the Hill filmstrip & audio cassette

LEARNING FOLDER



Contents

Water

BOOKS
Spot Goes to the Beach by Eric Hill
At the Beach by Anne Rockwell
The Beast in the Bathtub by Kathleen Stevens
Boat Book by Gail Gibbons

MATERIALS
bucket
apron
water wheel
stacking boats
pump
watering can
scoop
sailboat
templates of sea creatures
rubber stamps of sea creatures & ink pads
sponges in shapes of animals

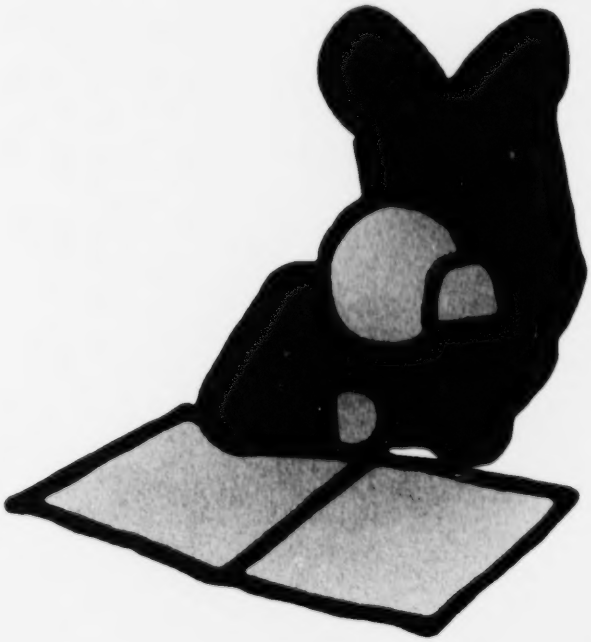
LEARNING FOLDER

Grandparents

BOOKS
Grandpa and Bo by Kevin Henkes
Apple Pie and Onions by Judith Caseley
Grandpa and Me by Neil Ricklen
Grandma and Me by Neil Ricklen
Grandmas and Grandpas edited by Richard & Helen Exley

MATERIALS
grandmother doll
metal story board with wooden figures
Little Tike family car with 4 people & dog
Stand-up family figures
grandfather puzzle
When I Was Young in the Mountains filmstrip & audio cassette
Where the River Begins filmstrip & audio cassette
grandmother & grandfather puppets

LEARNING FOLDER



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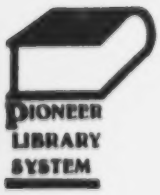

For additional information and to receive a free video cassette explaining the project further, contact:

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